The New York State Association for Bilingual Education Newsletter

The NYSABE Bilingual Times

Page 1 FALL 2025 Issue

New York University
Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools

155 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10013

www.NYSABE.net

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A Message from the President

WELCOME

Eliezer Hernández, Ed.D.

Dear NYSABE Community,

As we prepare for NYSABE's 50th Anniversary in 2026, we reflect on a legacy built on collaboration, advocacy, and the belief that every child's language and culture are gifts to be cherished. For five decades, our community has worked hand in hand to ensure that bilingual education is not just a program, but a promise of equity, opportunity, and respect for diversity.

Today, that promise continues with the support of our new Delegate Assembly Members, who bring fresh energy and commitment to our shared mission. They represent the voices of classrooms, schools, and communities across New York State, and together, we will keep pushing forward to create spaces where multilingual learners thrive.

This upcoming 50th anniversary is more than a milestone, it's a reminder that our work is far from finished. In a time when linguistic and cultural diversity enriches every aspect of society, we must stand united to protect and expand bilingual education for future generations. Your dedication, whether as a teacher, administrator, student, family member, or ally, makes this movement strong.

(Continue on page 2)

Message from NYSABE President, Eliezer Hernández
Page 1

The 50th Anniversary NYSABE Conference
Page 3

A Note from the Editor Cecilia M. Espinosa
Page 4

From the Desk of the Executive Director Nancy Villarreal de Adler
Page 5

Meet the Newly Elected and Appointed NYSABE Delegates
Page 6

In Memoriam: Ana Soto-Artist, Advocate, and Educator
By Nancy Villarreal de Adler
Page 7

Honoring Hernán LaFontaine
By Bernice Moro
Page 9

The Haitian American United for Progress (HAUP) Celebrated 50 Yars of Service
By Nicole Rosefort
Page 11

Educational Policy and Advocacy Update-Fall 2025
By Tamara Alsace and Kate Menken
Page 13

NYSABE Welcomes the Newly Selected Senior Co-Editors of the NYSABE Journal of the Multilingual Education Research (JMER). A Renewed Vision for Multilingual Education Research and Practice
By Laura Ascenzi-Moreno and Maite Sánchez
Page 15

Thank you JMER Leaders!
By Nancy Villarreal de Adler
Page 16

The Herman Badillo Bilingual Academy-Buffalo, NY
By David Cabán
Page 17

Bilingual Education Enrichment for Asian Communities
By Florence H. Pu Folkes
Page 19

(Continued from p. 1)

We invite you to engage in civil discourse and continue sharing ideas and strategies that protect the sanctity of all our children. Together, let's ensure that every voice is heard, every language is valued, and every child has the opportunity to succeed.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Let's honor our past, embrace the present, and prepare for a future where bilingualism and biliteracy are celebrated as essential to learning and life.

With appreciation and solidarity,

Eliezer Hernández

1976 - 2026

50th ANNIVERSARY NYSABE

THE NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

50 YEARS OF NYSABE: BREAKING BARRIERS Through BILINGUAL EDUCATION

NYSABE

March 19 - 21, 2026 | Sonesta White Plains Downtown | www.nysabe.net/2026conference

- 3 Major Sessions
- 5 Highlighted Sessions
- 95+ Workshops with CTLE Credits
- Leadership Forum
- Curriculum Partners
- President's Reception
- 1-Year NYSABE Membership
- Access to the 50th Anniversary Webinar Series

Presentations on

- WIDA in NYS
- Reading and Multilingual Learners
- Seal of Biliteracy
- and much more

Thursday Keynote Speaker

MONTSERRAT GARIBAY

Friday Keynote Speaker

OFELIA GARCÍA

Saturday Keynote Speaker

KATE SELTZER

Catch the Early Bird Special
Expires on January 16th

Visit Our Website
www.nysabe.net/2026conference

A Note from the Editor

Cecilia M. Espinosa, Ph.D.
Professor, Lehman College/CUNY

Dear NYSABE Members,

The history of bilingual education in New York State is without doubt one of deep commitment, courage, and determination. Throughout the last 50 years, the field of bilingual education in New York State has been led by visionary leaders who worked alongside policymakers to develop programs and policies that affirmed and nurtured the gifts multilingual children and their families bring with them. The struggles bilingual education faces today are not very different from those of the past. Too many children in New York State don't have access to bilingual education; there continues to be a scarcity of bilingual teachers; the materials they read do not mirror their socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds. These struggles demand tenacity and commitment. Five decades later, NYSABE is, once again, called to lead the way towards a vision of equity and excellence for the education of all multilingual learners.

In this letter, I extend my sincere gratitude to my co-editor, Nancy Villarreal de Adler, who has tirelessly worked to ensure that this volume offers us both important glimpses into the history of bilingual education in New York State, as well as a vision for how we need to respond in these current times when rapidly changing federal policies impact the quality of education that our multilingual learners receive daily. I also thank each of the authors of the different essays in this volume. These remind us of how far bilingual education in New York has come; these are also a call to action, one that will require each one of our voices and efforts. Finally, many thanks to NYSABE's President, Eliezer Hernández, for designing the NYSABE Newsletter.

We know you will feel both a sense of great pride and the need to act urgently as you read these essays.

Cecilia

"Unlike models of reading that undergird linear, formulaic, "standard" or "best practices," culturally sustaining, humanizing reading pedagogies can be fluid, dynamic, and life-affirming —honoring ways of knowing, being, and reading already present in communities."
(Tuner Nash, Arce-Boardman, Peele)

From the Desk of the Executive Director

Nancy Villarreal de Adler
Executive Director, NYSABE

"The best way to honor our past accomplishments is by building on top of their breakthroughs"
Bill Johnson

As we approach the 50th anniversary of NYSABE, I invite you to join us in celebrating the accomplishments of our past and present bilingual education heroes. Let us acknowledge the challenges that educators, families, and community members initially confronted more than 50 years ago, and that they continue to encounter today. To this day, we continue to face challenges in establishing educational policies that ensure equitable educational opportunities for all multilingual students. Together, let us also honor the countless educators who, over the years, have sought and implemented the best classroom and school-wide pedagogical practices, grounded in sound educational research, to ensure the academic and socio-emotional success of our students in bilingual education programs. Furthermore, let us all celebrate the work of community members who have joined NYSABE in its advocacy efforts to protect and promote bilingual education in New York State and across the nation.

Dear bilingual education heroes, thank you and congratulations for building the road we walk on, leading towards the achievement of our goal: To break all barriers and ensure the best education for our students through bilingual education.

1976 - 2026 50th ANNIVERSARY NYSABE
THE NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

50 YEARS OF NYSABE:
BREAKING BARRIERS Through BILINGUAL EDUCATION

You're invited to the 50th Anniversary Conference of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE).

This year, we proudly celebrate a powerful milestone: half a century of advocacy, service, and unwavering commitment to advancing equity for multilingual learners across New York State.

March 19 - 21, 2026 | Sonesta White Plains Downtown | www.nysabe.net/2026conference

Meet the Newly Elected & Appointed NYSABE Delegates (2025–2026)

DELEGATES-AT-LARGE

Dr. Elizabeth Falzone

Justine Lucas

Dr. Shirley M. Pincay

Lyda Ragonese

REGIONAL DELEGATES

María Petrella (Region V)

Judith Ravina (Region III)

PARENTS-AT-LARGE

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Dabralis R. Garmon

Learn more about NYSABE's Delegates here: (LINK)

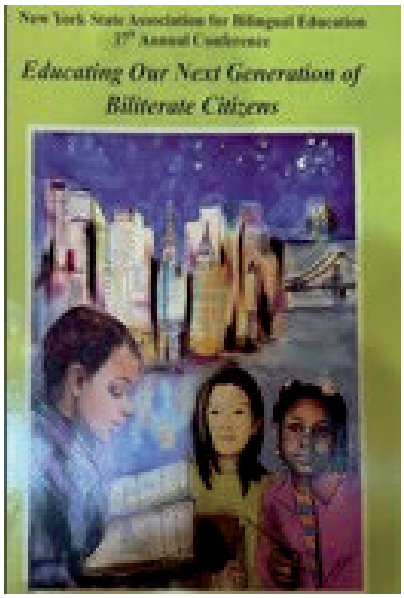
In Memoriam
ANA SOTO
Artist, Advocate, Educator
February 19, 1953 – June 29, 2025

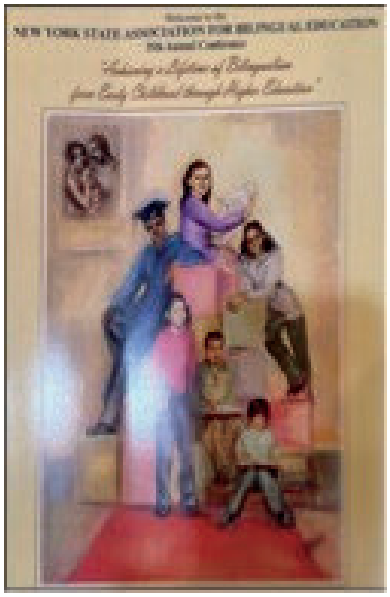
Ana Soto was an artist born in Argentina and recognized internationally for her pictorial work. She demonstrated high artistic impressionist and expressionist techniques, especially in the use of pastels and mixed techniques in landscapes, portraits, and figures. She achieved international recognition by having her work exhibited in museums in her native Argentina, across Europe, the Far East, Latin America, and the United States. Her artwork has also been exhibited at the Museum of the Vatican City.

Ana Soto was the recipient of the Silver Medal and Certificate from the Francois Academy, which was presented by representatives from the French Embassy in New York City in 1994. In 2006, she received the Artist Woman of the Year award at the International Women's Democrats and the United Nations Human Rights Recognition in Rome.

Ana Soto, the exceptional artist, was a strong voice at the New York State Association (NYSABE) by advocating for quality bilingual education that addresses the needs and aspirations of students, their families, educators and communities. Ana's school and classroom art projects, numerous covers of NYSABE conference program books and posters, and her participation in community events provide clear evidence of her vision and generous commitment to multicultural, multilingual education.

In Memorium of Ana Soto





"Each painting Ana created was crafted with care, with love, and with her unmistakable spirit. And that spirit remains.... Every portrait she painted holds a piece of her heart."

Luis Quan, Principal,
PS 126X, NYC Public Schools,

Luis Quan has shared his remembrance of Ana as an extraordinary human being involved in his school's projects:

"Ana Soto was a dear friend, a quiet light, and a soul whose presence brought warmth, humility, and beauty to our lives. She was a woman whose spirit illuminated every room she entered—not through grand gestures, but through a gentle smile, a kind word, and a heart that gave without ever expecting anything in return. She gave of herself selflessly, always willing to lend a hand, offer support, or simply be there. Her generosity was not a performance—it was who she was. In our school community, Ana played an immeasurable role in creating a place of welcome, of beauty, of belonging. She had a gift—not just as an artist, but as a person. Through her artwork, she helped transform our school into a vibrant space where students, families, and staff could feel connected, inspired, and seen. Her art did more than decorate walls—it reflected the very soul of our community. You'll find Ana's spirit in every corner of our school. Her artwork graces the office where I work, the school library where children gather to read, classroom walls that hold young dreams, doors that open to new opportunities, hallways filled with energy, and the auditorium where voices rise in celebration. Even in our garden and the students' playroom, her brushstrokes remind us that we are loved, that we are home. Each painting Ana created was crafted with care, with love, and with her unmistakable spirit. And that spirit remains. You can feel it in the colors, in the warmth, in the way her art embraces you. Every portrait she painted holds a piece of her heart. We are reminded of how deeply she cared for each of us. Ana may no longer be with us physically, but her love continues to speak to us—quietly, gently, and powerfully—through every mural, every canvas, every brushstroke she left behind. Her legacy is not just in her art, but in the love she poured into our school community. We will miss her dearly. But Ana will never be forgotten. She will always be in our hearts, and her memory will forever live on in the art that surrounds us. Each time we pass by one of her paintings, we'll be reminded not only of her talent, but of how much she loved us. May we honor her by continuing to nurture the light she brought into our lives."

Thank you, Mr. Quan, for joining us in honoring our beloved Ana.

Nancy Villarreal de Adler, Executive Director, NYSABE

Honoring Hernán LaFontaine

Bernice Moro, Ph.D.
NYSABE Past-President 2006-2007

LaFontaine was the first superintendent with Puerto Rican heritage in charge of a school district in the United States

It is with great pleasure that I announce that our esteemed colleague, Hernán LaFontaine, one of the founders of the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) and the New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE), Principal of Public School 25, New York City Public Schools, and former superintendent of the Hartford Public Schools in Connecticut, has been honored by this school district by having his name added to their Classical Magnet School. Below please find the official announcement which offers details of his remarkable achievement and his contributions to the field of education.

Hartford Public Schools to Honor Former Superintendent Hernán LaFontaine by Adding His Name to Classical Magnet School

HARTFORD, Conn. (September 16, 2025) – Former Hartford School's superintendent and city council president Hernán LaFontaine will have his name incorporated into Classical Magnet School after a unanimous vote by the Board of Education on Tuesday to rename the school in his honor.

The Hernán LaFontaine Classical Magnet School will continue delivering a liberal arts curriculum centered in the classics, an educational theme that LaFontaine championed through his tenure as schools' superintendent. LaFontaine, who continues to live in Hartford with his wife Evelyn, is believed to be the first person of Puerto Rican descent to be hired as a schools' superintendent in Hartford, Connecticut, and in any state of the nation, back in 1979.

"Our board members have heard many positive comments and feedback celebrating Mr. LaFontaine's important contributions to education. Adding Hernán LaFontaine's name to Classical Magnet School is a well-deserved recognition to honor his accomplishments and dedication to the city of Hartford and its children," said Board Member Jennifer Hockenhull, who stepped down as board chairperson today at the meeting held at MD Fox. "We thank everyone who came out in his support and we are glad to know that Mr. LaFontaine and his family will always cherish this special day."

Before moving to Hartford and becoming the city's superintendent, LaFontaine was the director of New York City's bilingual education program. LaFontaine's pedagogic approach, professional experience, multicultural awareness, and his bilingual language proficiency in both English and Spanish, were uniquely valuable assets in Hartford, a city with a high concentration of Puerto Rican households whose first language was not English.

(Continued on page 10)

Honoring Hernán LaFontaine

(Continued from page 9)

"It's amazing, it's a fantasy! It's something that I would have never dreamed of. It's a tribute to all the things that we were able to accomplish at Hartford schools with the support of many talented individuals," said LaFontaine, whose family emigrated in the 1920s from the mountain town of Utuado, Puerto Rico, to the busy streets of New York City. "I want to thank my beautiful wife, Evelyn, because this never would have been possible without her. And thanks to our Board of Education for this magnificent symbolic gesture. I am living the dream."

LaFontaine grew up as a child in "El Barrio", also known as Spanish Harlem, on the east side of Central Park at 110 Street. He graduated from Stuyvesant High School and attended the City College of New York, where he earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Science.

"I feel honored to meet such a unique and distinguished educator right here in Hartford. It's very important to commemorate our history and remember the giant steps that our community leaders took in the past. On behalf of the Hartford Public Schools and the Board of Education, congratulations to Mr. LaFontaine and his family," said Superintendent Andraé Townsel.

LaFontaine worked as a chemist in the pharmaceutical industry, but his interests in community affairs and advancing K-12 education led him to teaching and public education. In 1969, he was appointed as principal of P.S. 25 in the Bronx, the first completely bilingual school in the history of the New York City school system and in the entire northeast region of the country.

"History is not simply about the past. It's about who we are now and how we can be better in the future. Today's vote celebrates the legacy of Professor Hernán LaFontaine and serves as an important reminder that his life's work is still relevant. Let's continue the work to provide high quality education to every student," said Board Member Ruth Fortune, who chairs the Board's Policy Committee.

HAUP Legacy50: A Celebration of Progress, Purpose & Possibility

Nicole Rosefort
President of the Haitian American United for Progress (HAUFP)

What an unforgettable milestone! On October 4th, 2025, Haitian Americans United for Progress (HAUP) proudly celebrated 50 years of service, advocacy, and community empowerment at a Legacy50 Luncheon at Terrace on the Park in Queens, NY. Founders, volunteers, friends, and past and present staff gathered to commemorate five decades of impact, from helping families find stability and opportunity to shaping leaders and supporting community, language, and culture.

HAUP began as a volunteer-based organization focused initially on responding to the needs of Haitian immigrants and refugees in 1975.

Since it was founded, HAUP has consistently assisted immigrant and refugee families and individuals to meet their needs and to become productive citizens. In the 1980s, when the wave of Haitian refugees came ashore in Florida and had to be resettled in the New York area, HAUP was very involved in helping hundreds of refugees find shelter, food, clothing, employment, and other types of support services. HAUP is dedicated to empowering and serving the community. HAUP provides a supportive environment through education, training, culture,

(Continued on p. 12)

HAUP Legacy50: A Celebration of Progress, Purpose & Possibility

(Continued from p. 11)

networking opportunities, and other support services that allow the community to successfully adapt and thrive. Programs include Immigration and Resettlement Programs and Services, Migrant Enrichment Services Initiative (MESI), youth activities, after-school programs, translation and legal services, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and maternal and infant health services.

The Legacy50 luncheon offered a meaningful opportunity for everyone to reflect on cherished moments, share lasting memories, and reaffirm their commitment to a journey rooted in hope, service, and unity.

Educational Policy and Advocacy Update

Kate Menken, Ph.D.
Professor of Linguistics, Queens College
2025 Gladys Correa Memorial Award Recipient
NYSABE Advocacy Committee Co-Chairperson

Tamara O. Alsace, Ph.D.
NYSABE Past-President
2018 Gladys Correa Memorial Award Recipient
NYSABE Advocacy Committee Co-Chairperson

NYSABE Advocacy Executive Committee Members:
Analy Cruz-Phommany, Ivana Espinet, Ph.D., Maeva López-Kassem, Ph.D., and Lyda Ragonese

Advocacy is central to the work of NYSABE, and as our organization turns 50, advocacy work is more urgent than ever. We thank all of our members for being so responsive to our past advocacy campaigns, and would like to ask you for your continued activism. Immigrant and multilingual students are navigating deeply uncertain times as they face mounting pressures from a series of aggressive policy changes targeting their legal status, their languages, and their educational access and opportunities.

Protect Title III!!!!

- Send letters to representatives now, urging them to allocate Fiscal Year 2026 Education appropriations for Title III

Title III, entitled "Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students," provides essential federal funding to New York State and local education agencies for language instruction, academic support services, and professional development for the education of multilingual learners. Over the summer of 2025, the Trump administration withheld Title III funding for Fiscal Year 2025 despite Congress having already appropriated $890 million.

In response, NYSABE hosted an Emergency Town Hall Meeting on July 17, 2025, in which NYSABE members who attended - many of whom directly manage Title III funds - provided specific examples about how Title III funds are currently being used in districts and schools across New York. They also participated in our advocacy campaign to share our concerns with our elected representatives. NYSABE was also featured in a webinar by the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), in which we engaged with bilingual educators across the country about our advocacy work and continued to contact legislators. As a result of coordinated advocacy efforts in New York and elsewhere across the country, Title III funds for 2025 were eventually released. However, this work is far from over.

The Trump administration has proposed for Fiscal Year 2026 to defund Title III altogether. We refuse to stay silent!! Stand with us as we release our new NYSABE Position Statement on the Need to Protect Title III Funding for Fiscal Year 2026 and share it widely. It summarizes the information we gathered during our July Town Hall meeting, outlining funding is used in New York so that people outside our field can understand what is at stake for

(Continue on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

education in our state if this funding is cut. NYSABE also co-sponsored a webinar with New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) and New York State Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (NYSTESOL), "ELL Funding and Policy Updates for New York Educators," on October 28, 2025. The webinar shared the latest information and organized our statewide efforts in unity. Use this QR code to see the recording of the webinar. for multilingual learners in our state.

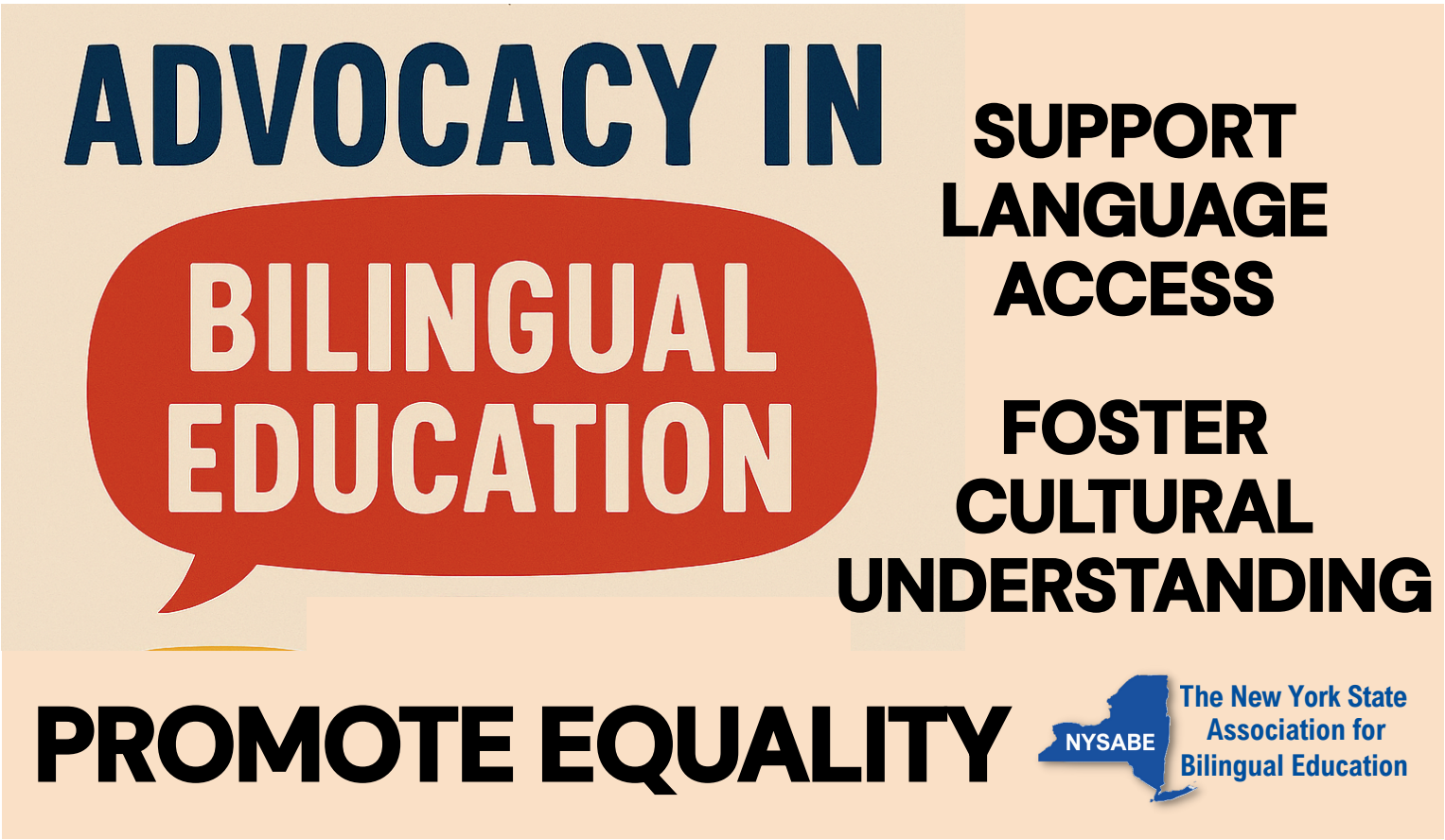
Proposed Legislation That NYSABE Supports

There are several promising state bills that we are supporting. We ask all NYSABE members to take some time to contact their state senators and state assembly members to ask them for their support of the following bills (Note: The same bill will have a different NYS Senate number [S] and NYS Assembly number [A]):

- Protect our Schools Act (S4735 - Sepulveda / A5373 - Cruz) Prohibits immigration enforcement in school settings
- New York for All Act (S2235 - Gounardes / A3506 - Reyes) Prohibits and regulates the discovery and disclosure of immigration status
- NYS Senate Bill S881 (Jackson)/ NYS Assembly Bill A8033 (Romero & González-Rojas) Require the preparation of educators to work with immigrant-origin students
- Bills S1025 (Jackson)/A 8034 (Romero & González-Rojas) to require districts to provide professional development on immigrant-focused trauma-informed practices for educators, counselors, and school leaders.

Here is a how-to sheet (see the QR code) with information on how to contact your NYS senator and assembly member, with a script you can follow in your email or phone call.

Remember: **We are all members of the NYSABE Advocacy Committee!** Therefore, please take a moment to reflect on what your advocacy work has been since last month, what you will do today, and what you will do in the days that follow to advance the ADVOCACY work of NYSABE on behalf of our multilingual learners, their families, and their educators. With actions large and small, together we make a difference!!



NYSABE Welcomes JMER's New Senior Co-Editors
A Renewed Vision for Multilingual Education Research and Practice

Laura Ascenzi-Moreno, Ph.D.
Brooklyn College, CUNY

Maite T. Sánchez, Ph.D.
Hunter College, CUNY

Dr. Laura Ascenzi-Moreno (Brooklyn College, City University of New York) and Dr. Maite T. Sánchez (Hunter College, City University of New York) are the two new senior co-editors of NYSABE's Journal of Multilingual Education Research (JMER).

Their Vision

Dr. Ascenzi-Moreno and Dr. Maite T. Sánchez have stated the following:

"The journal will continue to publish both research and practice-oriented articles in the fields of multilingualism and multilingual education. Building on the journal's strong tradition, our vision for the next phase of JMER is to uplift the most pressing issues in the fields of bilingual education, multilingualism, and multilingual education. We aim to feature research and practice that deepen our understanding of multilingual education for children and families in New York State and beyond.

We know that JMER will continue to be a vibrant forum where theory and practice meet, where the work we publish supports educators and administrators working with multilingual learners in making a real change in their work in classrooms, with families, and with policymakers. We seek a wide range of articles that are accessible, relevant, and resonant for educators. We welcome both scholarly work and creative pieces to the journal.

We are also committed to cultivating and supporting both new and returning authors to grow with JMER. Our focus will remain on the topics that matter most to bilingual educators - linguistic and racial justice, culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogy, literacy, interdisciplinary, curriculum and practice, and the socio-political contexts that shape multilingual education today through special issues and open volumes.

We welcome the NYSABE membership to engage in conversation with us at the NYSABE Annual Conference!"

JOURNAL OF
MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION RESEARCH

JMER

Dr. Laura Ascenzi-Moreno - Co-Senior Editor
Dr. Maite T. Sánchez – Co-Senior Editor
Dr. Estrella Olivares-Orellana – Editor of Pedagogy and Practice
Dr. Marisol Alicea – Editor of Book Media Review
Dr. Ming Zhu – Editor of Podcast
Dr. Juliet M. Luther – Production Editor

Retiring from JMER
Dr. Aída A. Nevárez-La Torre – Retiring Senior Editor Emerita

Dr. Patricia Velasco – Book and Media Review Editor Emerita

Thank you, JMER Leaders!

Nancy Villarreal de Adler
Executive Director, NYSABE

In the year 2008, NYSABE welcomed Dr. Aida Nevárez La Torre as the new Senior Editor of the **Journal of Multilingual Education Research** (JMER). Dr. Nevárez La Torre and Nancy Villarreal de Adler met days before to discuss NYSABE's goal to develop a new research journal that would mirror NYSABE's vision: "To promote bilingual education as a valid and research-based educational process and approach by which academic success and socio-emotional development of students is ensured as they develop bilingualism and literacy."

The first meeting of NYSABE's leadership body with Dr. Nevárez was an inspirational experience for us all. She presented her thoughtfully crafted vision to expand the scope of rigorous research by exploring successful bilingual instructional practices in both the USA and other countries. In addition, the new JMER would seek to identify effective pedagogical methods in bilingual special education settings. One additional goal for the upcoming JMER would be to produce electronic issues that could be disseminated worldwide by using new electronic publication tools.

After 17 years of service and a treasure trove of highly regarded research journals published, Dr. Nevárez is passing on the torch. We congratulate and thank her for her unfailing commitment to leading NYSABE's JMER, an internationally recognized and respected publication.

As we salute Dr. Nevárez, we also express our sincere gratitude and best wishes to Dr Patricia Velasco, valued member of the JMER editorial team who is also moving on, for her profound commitment and contribution in developing our JMER. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of this team, JMER has become a highly professional journal that supports educators, policy makers, community leaders, and families in their quest to ensure high-quality bilingual education for all students.

Thank you and congratulations, Dr. Nevárez and Dr. Velasco!

Best wishes and many, many thanks!

The Journal of Multilingual Education Research (JMER) is the official journal of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education. Its distinct orientation reflects what is most important to researchers, specialists, and educators in the fields of multilingualism and multilingual education. JMER is a vehicle to disseminate changes and growth of knowledge in a variety of national and international language education issues that have local and regional relevance. It responds to the emerging needs and interests of teachers, administrators, teacher educators, researchers, counselors, psychologists, advocates, and community leaders whose work focuses on the successful education of multilingual learners. Access the latest Volume here: Volume 13 (2025)

The Herman Badillo Bilingual Academy Buffalo, New York

David Cabán, Ph.D.

How did one school evolve to have such a positive impact on the Hispanic community in Buffalo and bilingual education in New York State?

To answer that question, I begin with a brief history of bilingual education at the Herman Badillo School in Buffalo, New York. During my first year of teaching at the school, the district's project administrator for the Spanish English Developmental Program asked me to design and write a federally funded proposal for a bilingual program at School #76 (the school's name was later changed to the Herman Badillo Bilingual Academy in 1976). The proposal was approved, and a bilingual program was launched in the primary grades the following September, in 1971. The program was initially directed by Mrs. Carmen Rodríguez and expanded each year by one grade level through the eighth grade. It continued under this design until 1980, when, with community approval, the teachers and I—by then the newly assigned principal—redesigned it into a dual-language bilingual maintenance language program, not the second or target language. This program gave the school its strong reputation as a model for others in the district and across the state. Teacher preparation was another essential element. Institutions such as D'Youville University, led by Dr. Lillian Malave, Dr. Joanne Parla, and Dr. Olga Mendel; the University at Buffalo's bilingual program, led by Dr. Lillian Malave; and Buffalo State University's bilingual special education program, led by Dr. Sarita Samora Curry, ensured that teachers were exceptionally well-prepared. They trained educators to teach effectively in both languages, in addition to the certified content areas in which they specialized. In addition, the support of the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) Erie 1 BOCES, led by Marilyn Muirhead and followed by Denise Góñez Santos, was crucial in addressing the needs and challenges of the newly designed bilingual program at the school.

Another key factor was the stability and long-term commitment of teachers and support staff, which provided consistency and program. The school's success was mainly due to the efforts of its teachers and support staff. Many of us were first-generation Hispanics from similar backgrounds, which allowed us to deeply relate to the families we served. We came well-prepared educationally and had a strong sense of cultural identity, which enabled us to support students and families without expecting them to give up their language or culture. We believed that students could succeed in school and in life while proudly maintaining their heritage. We did not view them with pity; instead, we felt a personal connection—thinking of the students as our "nephews and nieces" and their families as our "aunts and uncles."

Without question, bilingual education was the driving force behind the school's success. It created opportunities for students to learn in both English and Spanish, and their peers admired those who became bilingual and biliterate, seeing them as "las estrellas" (the star students). Both languages were equally valued, and if student intervention/remediation was needed, it was done in the native language, not

(Continued on p. 18)

The Herman Badillo Bilingual Academy Buffalo, New York

(Continued from page 17)

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Another key factor was the stability and long-term commitment of teachers and support staff, which provided consistency and development in instruction and program delivery. Many teachers and aides chose to spend most of their careers at the school, while others went on to take dynamic leadership roles elsewhere. I served as principal of the school for twenty-two years, from 1980 to 2002. Support staff—including teacher aides and our community liaison—played an equally important role in creating a nurturing environment. Through programs like the Community School Project, the yearly Talent Show (with a sold-out audience for 18 consecutive years), and the Latin Band, they helped make the school a joyful and safe place for children. Their patience, protective nature, and dedication fostered a strong sense of belonging. Many of these staff members also had their own children enrolled in the bilingual program, which deepened their personal investment in the school's success.

A fourth factor was the school's culture of positivity and recognition. Student achievement was consistently celebrated through quarterly honor assemblies, as well as gold, silver, and bronze medals for the honor roll, merit roll, and perfect attendance for the entire year. Monthly "Student of the Month" ice cream socials encouraged students to improve both their academic performance and behavior. By celebrating effort, improvement, and success, the school cultivated a spirit of encouragement, pride, and motivation.

Finally, the school's commitment extended beyond academics—it addressed the needs of both students and their families. Through a two-tier, door-to-door community survey, we identified several needs and responded accordingly. A Spanish GED program and Spanish literacy classes were implemented for parents who wanted to learn to read in their native language. Students took pride in seeing their parents learning at the same school they attended. We also organized cultural programs on Friday evenings for families and the broader community, thereby strengthening the bond between home, school, and neighborhood. We had adult volunteers from our business partnerships and community members reading daily with identified students in both languages through our HOSTS (Helping One Student to Succeed) Program. We provided a year-round school with a summer program offering weekly themes, field trips, after-school tutoring, recreational activities, and evening programs for students and their families. Lastly, in partnership with one of our city's medical centers, we provided a full-time nurse and a social worker/psychologist to address the medical and psychosocial needs of the students and their families at the school.

Together, these factors—the dual-language bilingual program, the dedication of teachers and staff, the support of training institutions and Erie 1 RBERN, strong community partnerships with a focus on families, and a positive, inclusive school culture—transformed the school into a model institution with a lasting impact on Buffalo's Hispanic community and bilingual education throughout New York.

Dr. David Cabán

Bilingual Education Enrichment for Asian Communities

Florence H. Pu-Folkes, Ph.D.

The United States of America is truly a country of immigrants who hail from East, West, North and South of the entire world. Unfortunately, education designed specifically to help English as a second language learners, did not materialize until the Mid-Sixties when a methodology developed as ESL, was introduced and incorporated into the school curriculum. In addition, monetary assistance to teach these students through the Title VII funds from the Federal Government and the Commissioner's Regulation 154 (CR Part 154) from NYS were made available. Offices such as OBEMLA (Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs), New York State Office of Bilingual Education and New York City Office of Bilingual Education assisted with the development of proposals for grants earmarked for the enrichment education of Second Language Learners and for monitoring the process in educating these students.

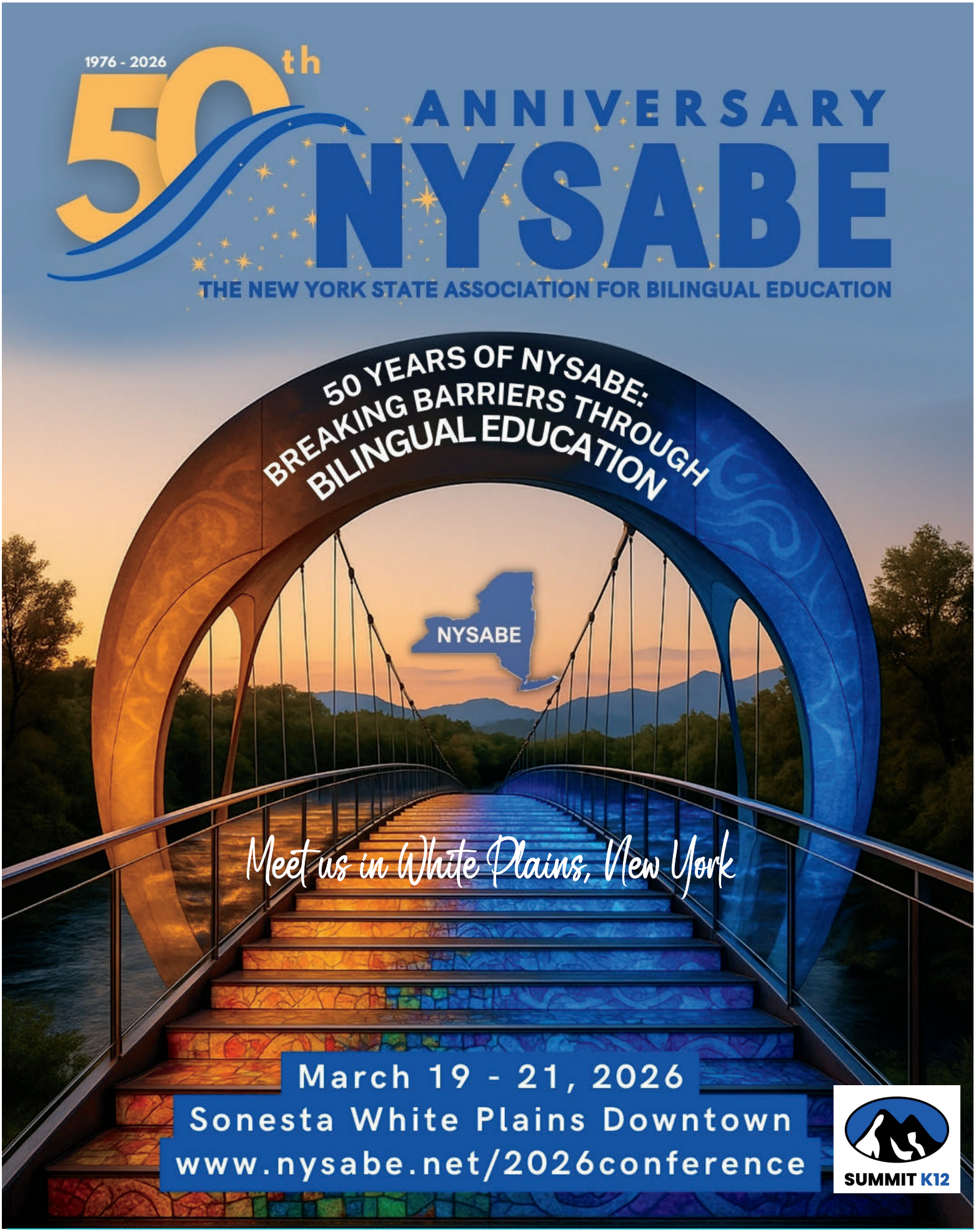
Institutions of Higher Education such as Columbia University, Fordham University, New York University work alongside with bilingual education projects staff to ensure that the programs are in keeping with regulations and required standards.

As a result of these efforts NYC schools with large Asian populations in the five boroughs [Chinese, Koreans, Vietnamese, Indians (especially Bengalis)] since then have been able to hire teachers, train them specifically in working with the second language learners and assist them in the evaluation of their progress. In addition to teaching second language learners, there are enrichment activities such as annual citywide, statewide essay contests; painting, drawing contests; musical performances by these students that foster their acculturation. Similar services are offered throughout New York State.

Alongside these activities, parental involvement has been introduced and is encouraged. Parents of second language learners receive special funds to attend meetings at schools, Board of Education offices, as well as the NYS Association of Bilingual Education (NYSABE) Annual Conferences. It is worthy to note that NYSABE has a delegate specifically assigned to bring busloads of parents to the annual conferences to participate in programs geared specifically to the interest and enhancement of these parents.

A special Title VII grant recipient program, the Asian Languages Bilingual Education Technical Assistance Center (ALBETAC) also emerged in the 1970s to work with these students and train school staff as well as train and work with parents in the teaching methodology of ESL. Educators understand that this methodology enhances second language literacy achievement while supporting native language usage.

I congratulate NYSABE on their 50th Anniversary and wish them much success in advocating for all second language learners and their families and for their goal to have NYS legislators introduce a bill to adopt an "English Plus" Multilingual Resolution.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NYSABE
New York University Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools
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THE ORGANIZATION

NYSABE is a multilingual, multicultural professional association that promotes the academic achievement of more than 300,000 English Language Learners (ELLs)/bilingual students, and supports the development of bi-literacy skills among all students in New York State. Founded in 1976, NYSABE unites educators, parents, community and business leaders, elected officials, researchers, members of professional organizations, educational institutions, and the news media sharing a common goal - to ensure excellence and equity for students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

NYSABE encourages the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of quality programs in bilingual education.

NYSABE promotes bilingual education as a process by which students achieve academic success through instruction in English and a language other than English. NYSABE supports the belief that language pluralism and literacy in more than one language benefit the nation and all its citizens.

NYSABE collaborates with the NYS Education Department, school districts, and educational institutions by participating in their initiatives and ensuring excellence and equity in the education of ELLs/bilingual learners. NYSABE is affiliated with the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) and the New York State Council of Educational Associations (NYSCEA).

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

Join the NYSABE team! Through your membership dues and involvement, you will have the opportunity to make integral contributions towards positive educational change for ELLs/bilingual students.

Membership benefits include:

NYSABE Journal of Multilingual Education Research (JMER): The yearly issue of this journal is a must for every library and member of the association. It publishes current research on best practices in instructional methodologies, optimum program models, and key elements in the implementation of successful bilingual education programs.

The NYSABE Newsletter, *The Bilingual Times:* The quarterly issues of The Bilingual Times offer updates on the regional and statewide activities of the association and its members. *The Bilingual Times* also provides information on current legislative and policy developments as well as articles on best educational approaches for ELLs/bilingual students.

Professional development: NYSABE offers local, regional, and statewide professional development activities that focus on optimum, research-based practices in bilingual education. These activities create a professional forum suitable to network with other professionals in your field of interest, to share experiences, and explore new ideas.

Advocacy and Leadership: NYSABE offers opportunities to develop leadership skills while participating in hands-on training, special committees, language group events, and advocacy activities on behalf of students, their parents, and educators.

NYSABE wishes to thank all of our contributors and supporters for lending their expertise to this publication.

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